

# American

## NEWS & VIEWS

*A Daily Newsletter from Public Affairs, American Embassy*

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**Secretary Clinton's Upcoming Trip to Asia October 27–November 8**

U.S. Department of State  
Office of the Spokesman  
Washington, DC  
October 22, 2010

**Secretary Clinton: Travel to Asia**

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton will travel to Hawaii, Vietnam, Cambodia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, New Zealand, and Australia October 27–November 8.

Secretary Clinton arrives in Honolulu on October 27 where she will meet with Japanese Foreign Minister Seiji Maehara to discuss a broad range of issues, including our close coordination during our back-to-back Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) host years. This meeting underscores the enduring importance of the U.S.-Japan alliance as a cornerstone of American engagement in the Asia-Pacific. On October 28, for the second time in Hawaii, the Secretary will deliver a major policy speech on the United States' role as a Pacific nation.

Secretary Clinton will travel to Hanoi on October 29 for her second trip to Vietnam in less than four months. The Secretary will represent the United States at the East Asia Summit and participate in a Lower Mekong Initiative meeting, deepening U.S. engagement with Asia's multilateral institutions. The Secretary will also meet with Vietnamese leaders. On October 30, the Secretary will depart for Cambodia where she will meet with government and civil society leaders in Phnom Penh and visit Angkor Wat, a UNESCO World Heritage site. She will continue on to Malaysia on November 1 to meet with senior officials, discuss our enhanced ties, promote trade, and discuss educational exchanges between our countries.

On November 3, Secretary Clinton will travel to Papua New Guinea to meet Prime Minister Sir Michael Somare and other senior government officials, women leaders and environmental experts. This stop is part of a larger process of enhancing U.S. engagement in the Pacific. She will continue to New Zealand, to meet with senior government officials, including Prime Minister John Key and Foreign Minister Murray McCully, on a wide range of issues that are important to the forward-looking trajectory of our bilateral relationship. On November 6, Secretary Clinton will travel to Australia to join U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, Australian Foreign Minister Kevin Rudd, and Australian Defense Minister Stephen Smith in Melbourne for the 25th anniversary of the annual Australia-United States Ministerial Consultations (AUSMIN) to discuss regional and global security issues.

Secretary Clinton will also meet with Prime Minister Julia Gillard.

Secretary Clinton returns to Washington, DC on November 8.

**U.S. Funds Will Help Provide Clean Water to Jordan**

By Stephen Kaufman  
Staff Writer

Washington — The Obama administration is investing \$275 million through the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) to help provide nearly 2 million Jordanians with reliable access to clean water, which Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton says is “the very core of one of Jordan’s most serious challenges.”

Clinton was joined by Jordanian Foreign Minister Nasser Judeh, MCC Chief Executive Officer Daniel Yohannes and Jordanian Minister of Water and Irrigation Mohammad Najjar at the October 25 signing of the MCC grant at the State Department in Washington.

“This will be a tangible demonstration of this friendship that exists between the people of Jordan and the people of the United States,” Clinton said.

“Because of the upgrades that will be made to the water supply network, and to improving wastewater collection and to expanding a key wastewater treatment plant, nearly 2 million people will gain more reliable access to clean water, many for the first time,” she said.

According to Yohannes, the MCC will use the grant to invest in three integrated water and wastewater projects serving the city of Zarqa, where “nearly three in 10 households consume less than the minimum amount of water considered essential for personal hygiene and for safety,” Yohannes said.

Addressing Jordan’s water scarcity “is a priority for improving livelihoods, reducing poverty and achieving sustainable economic growth,” Yohannes said.

Clinton said the water supply project will also help protect Jordan’s environment, spur sustainable economic growth and improve public health. Jordanians, she added, will see immediate results due to new construction jobs that will be needed for the project.

“We are making this investment in your country because we believe in Jordan’s promise and we are committed to Jordan’s future,” Clinton said. “Americans understand that a strong and prosperous Jordan is good for the region and good for the world.”

Foreign Minister Judeh said the \$275 million MCC grant

will make up 20 percent of the capital investment in Jordan's water sector over the next three years.

The program will have a positive effect on many Jordanians, he said, because water scarcity is one of the gravest challenges his country faces.

Judeh said the MCC program in Jordan is showing "relevance to the real needs of Jordanians, innovation in finding practical solutions to the challenges we face and determination in implementing them."

The MCC administers the Millennium Challenge Account, a U.S. initiative launched in 2002 that links the award of development funds with responsible governance. Funds are awarded to countries that encourage the rule of law, promote economic freedom and invest in their people. In the Middle East and North Africa region, the United States has also signed a compact with Morocco to fund projects aimed at reducing poverty and stimulating economic growth.

### **U.S. Speeds Assistance to Haiti to Halt Cholera Outbreak**

By Stephen Kaufman  
Staff Writer

Washington — In response to an outbreak of cholera in Haiti, the U.S. Embassy in Port-au-Prince issued a disaster declaration October 22 that has helped to streamline delivery of U.S. funding and medical supplies to the country in recent days.

State Department spokesman P.J. Crowley told reporters October 25 that the Obama administration is focusing "intensive energy on the situation in Haiti," where cholera has killed 259 people and infected more than 3,000 others.

The disaster declaration, issued by U.S. Ambassador to Haiti Kenneth Merten, "has enabled us to rapidly procure and provide 1,000 special cholera beds," Crowley said, adding that a joint Haitian-U.S. epidemiological team is "continuing to oversee diagnosis, surveillance and treatment protocols, as we work with the Haitian government and other partners to stem the outbreak."

According to an October 24 statement from the U.S. Embassy in Port-au-Prince, the epidemiological team includes employees from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and they are also working to "assess and train health care providers on the latest treatment and rehydration protocols."

Cholera is an intestinal infection that causes diarrhea and vomiting and can quickly lead to severe dehydration and death. It is transmitted by water and food that has been

contaminated due to inadequate sanitation and environmental-management lapses.

The embassy said the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has mobilized the distribution of cholera treatment assets from the existing stocks of its implementing partners. The supplies include cots, pads, oral rehydration salts, intravenous fluids and disinfecting and water-purification solutions.

USAID will also provide Haiti with 60,000 units of lactated Ringer solution, which can treat up to 4,000 severely dehydrated patients, and is working with its partners to disseminate public health information to the Haitian public via radio, pamphlets and mobile loudspeakers, according to the embassy.

Along with rapidly procuring and providing Haiti with the 1,000 cholera beds and other commodities, USAID has made an initial commitment of \$100,000 to provide emergency support to the Haitian Ministry of Health, the embassy statement said.

According to the Reuters news agency, Haitian officials and international aid agencies are reporting a slower rate of deaths from cholera as of October 25.

The daily death toll, which had previously numbered dozens each day, fell to six on October 24, and the rate of infection is also decreasing.

Haitian and international aid agencies are remaining on high alert to prevent the disease from spreading into new areas of the country.

Health experts are especially worried about the vulnerability of 1.3 million survivors of the January 12 earthquake who are living in tent and tarpaulin camps, as well as tens of thousands more who live in slums beside filthy watercourses, Reuters reported.

### **G20 Finance Officials Agree on Currency, Trade Strategies**

By Andrzej Zwaniecki  
Staff Writer

Washington — Only two weeks after failing to resolve differences at a meeting in Washington, financial officials of the world's major economies agreed to avoid conflicting currency interventions and, in principle, to reduce trade imbalances.

Finance ministers and central bank governors of the Group of 20 (G20) major economies met in Seoul, South Korea, on October 22-23 in a charged atmosphere after earlier accusations and counteraccusations among the group that some members had incited a "currency war"

and pursued “irresponsible” policies. Several countries — such as Japan, China and Brazil — have tried to push the value of their currencies down to help their exports.

The United States and many other countries believe that China’s policy of depressing its currency’s value constitutes the largest risk to the budding global recovery. China, however, criticized the U.S. central bank’s announcement of its intention to inject more money into the economy as an indirect measure intended to depreciate the value of the U.S. dollar. Both China and the United States have rejected the criticism. (After the G20 meeting, U.S. Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner met with China’s vice premier, Wang Qishan.)

Earlier this month in Washington, the G20 countries’ financial leaders failed to lower the tension over currency policies and related trade imbalances. However, in a communiqué issued at the end of the October 23 Seoul gathering, financial leaders pledged to “move towards more market determined exchange rate systems that reflect underlying economic fundamentals and refrain from competitive devaluation of currencies.”

G20 nations also committed to pursue policies “conducive to reducing excessive imbalances” and maintaining any trade imbalances at what they called “sustainable levels,” that is, levels that support balanced global economic growth without creating trade frictions.

“I think it’s fair to say for the first time we see the major economies come together and recognize that excess imbalances ... that can threaten growth and financial stability need to bring about adjustments in policies,” Geithner told reporters after the meeting.

#### TARGETING TRADE IMBALANCES

U.S. officials insist that policies that have led to significant trade surpluses in China, Germany and other economies and to trade deficits in others, especially in the United States, inevitably lead to trade tensions, which endanger economic recovery. Many economists believe that trade imbalances exacerbated the recent recession.

In a letter sent to his G20 counterparts in advance of the Seoul meeting, Geithner proposed lowering current account surpluses and deficits below specific levels through policy tactics of countries’ own choosing, according to news reports. The current account balance is the broadest measure of a country’s economic relations with the outside world. Many economists argue that economies with trade surpluses need to move away from export-led growth toward a greater reliance on domestic consumption and those with trade deficits, to move away from borrowing-fueled consumption toward more savings and growth driven more by exports and

investment.

The idea of numerical targets was resisted by countries with significant surpluses — such as China, Germany and Japan — according to news reports. The final communiqué said large imbalances will be “assessed against indicative guidelines to be agreed” on later and called on the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to measure countries’ progress toward targeted trade balances.

In a statement issued after the meeting, Geithner said that so far IMF’s ability “has been constrained by the reluctance of its members to expose themselves to a candid, independent, external assessment ... and to allow the IMF staff and management to offer broad judgments on exchange rate misalignments.”

The G20 finance ministers also agreed to a long sought transformation of IMF governance that would give major emerging market countries such as China more say in the fund, including more voting power and greater representation on its executive board. IMF Managing Director Dominique Strauss-Kahn welcomed what he called “historic” changes that he said would allow the IMF to speak more authoritatively on the issues essential to proper functioning of the world economy.

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